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Spring/Summer 2015

# Behind the BADGE

## LDWF Enforcement Headquarters

### CADET ACADEMIES: The Making of an LDWF Enforcement Agent

*When the Enforcement Division's head count gets low enough from the 235 agents allotted by the state and the budget allows, then it is time for another academy.*

As with any organization there will be attrition. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Enforcement Division is no different, as agents retire, switch careers or are sometimes let go.

Up until 1990, the LDWF Enforcement Division used various training methods for a cadet academy progressing along the way before implementing their own academy.



“Since the duties of a LDWF agent is so diverse and different than other law enforcement work, it was important for us to implement our own academy,” said Col. Joey Broussard, who was a part of the second ever graduating class from an LDWF academy in 1991.

LDWF has had 28 academies since 1991 with another starting in May 2015. That averages out to a little over one graduation a year. After a three-year break from academies following a budget short-fall, LDWF has graduated two classes since 2014 with another starting in May 2015.

“Our number of agents got dangerously low during the three-year hiring freeze considering we used to average one or more academy classes per year just to keep up with attrition,” said Broussard. “Thankfully we received approval for our last three classes to replenish our number of agents in the field and waterways.”

LDWF graduated 13 agents in June 2014 and in February 2015 graduated another 15, and hopes to at least graduate another 15 at the end of 2015.



5. A completed diploma or certificate in a two-year program in business administration, business management, corrections, criminal justice, law enforcement, forestry or a conservation related science from a vocational or technical school; or
6. Four years of continuous active military duty (all Military Occupational Specialties apply).

“...you can see it is a very prideful day for any cadet to make it through our training program.”  
- Col. Joey Broussard, head of LDWF’s Law Enforcement Division.

The process of becoming an agent starts with the minimum qualifications such as but not limited to a minimum of:

1. Two years of experience as a Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) level 1 certified peace officer in a full-time position, whose job duties include armed duty with the power of arrest; or
2. A minimum of 60 semester hours from an accredited college or university; or
3. Any two-year combination of Options 1 and 2 above, whereby 30 semester hours will be equivalent to one year of experience; or
4. Completion of an associate degree in business administration, business management, corrections, criminal justice, law enforcement, forestry or a conservation related science from a technical college. Accumulation of technical college hours without an associate degree does not qualify; or

If an applicant meets the minimum qualifications, they may fill out the application from the Louisiana Civil Service web site and take the LEAPS test. The selection process includes interviews, background checks and physical fitness tests. Once candidates successfully make it through the selection process they are hired as cadets for the next academy.

At the six-month academy held in Baton Rouge, cadets train to enforce the state’s recreational boating laws, the state and federal wildlife and fisheries laws, and general law enforcement work on the state’s many wildlife management areas. The academy also covers general law enforcement training equal to that of other state law enforcement officers. Agents are additionally trained for search and rescue and serve as the lead responders in search and rescue coordination under the Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness.



The graduating agents then fill vacancies in LDWF’s Enforcement Division and will be assigned to a field-training officer for their first six months of duty. Now part of the agency’s commissioned officer staff, the agents will join the ranks of those patrolling land and water to primarily detect game, fish and boating law violations. These duties require travel into Louisiana’s forests, swamps, fields, streams, bayous, lakes, marshlands, the Gulf of Mexico and on the state roadway system.

“We usually get in a few hundred applicants and interview at least a hundred of those before whittling it down to about 20 or so that actually get invited to the academy. From there we usually lose a few during the training and graduate in double digits somewhere,” said Broussard. “So you can see it is a very prideful day for any cadet to make it through our training program. Plus once graduated, they are ready to take on the tall task of an LDWF Enforcement Agent.”

For more information on how to become an agent, visit [www.wlf.louisiana.gov/enforcement/becoming-agent](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/enforcement/becoming-agent).



# BOATING SAFETY PROGRAM

## Paying Huge Dividends for Louisiana

*Sgt. Clay Marques contributed to this article.*

From 1993 to 2003, prior to the mandatory boating education law, Louisiana averaged approximately 152 incidents and 36 fatalities per year. In 2003, Louisiana began the mandatory Boating Education requirement.

In the last five years, Louisiana has averaged approximately 109 incidents and 26 fatalities per year. For the past two years, LDWF has reported record lows for boating fatalities: 15 in 2013 and 14 in 2014.

“Any one incident or fatality is too many,” said newly appointed Boating Education Coordinator, Sgt. Clay Marques. “However, anytime there is a decrease in fatalities and we report record lows two years in a row we will consider that as a good sign and progress.”

The LDWF Boating Safety Program has undergone a few changes in leadership in the past year. First off, Sammy Martin was recently promoted as Lieutenant Colonel and took over as the State Boating Law Administrator. Lt. Col. Martin has over 33 years of experience in the Enforcement Division. This position is the highest level of Louisiana’s Boating Program and plays a role in coordinating with the state’s legislature and Coast Guard on improving boating laws.

“Being the State Boating Law Administrator takes a broad understanding of the diverse recreational boating community while always keeping the best interest of public safety in mind,” said Martin. “During my time as administrator I hope to continue our downward trend of fatalities and incidents on the water.”

Marques is the new Boating Education Coordinator. This position reports directly to the Boating Law Administrator and is responsible for the overall supervision, planning, coordination, monitoring and continued development of the program. The coordinator is also responsible for administration, record-keeping and other duties necessary to keep the program successful.

As part of the LDWF Boating Safety Program, there are multiple events held during the boating season.

The first event was Boating Education Lagniappe Day on May 2, 2015 at eight locations across the state. During Boating Education Lagniappe Day, LDWF provides instructors for the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) boating education course, NASBLA boating education certification, food and drinks, giveaways and door prizes all free of charge to the public.

Anybody born after Jan. 1, 1984 must complete a NASBLA approved boating education course and carry proof of completion to operate a motorboat in excess of 10 horsepower. The course includes information on choosing a boat, classification, hulls, motors, legal requirements and equipment requirements. The course also covers many navigation rules and charts, trailering, sailboats, canoeing, personal watercraft and more. Completion of the course will result in the student being issued a vessel operators certification card.



Louisiana once again participated in Safe Boating Week from May 16-22, 2015. Safe Boating Week signifies the beginning of the spring and summer boating season. LDWF again reminded all boaters to be safe, responsible and knowledgeable while on the water during this safe boating week. Safe Boating Week is a time for all boaters to inspect their vessels to ensure that all required safety equipment is on board and that vessels are in good working condition. LDWF Enforcement Division agents are out in full force as always during the week to perform boating safety checks and driving or operating a vessel while intoxicated (DWI) patrols.

LDWF will also be participating in Operation Dry Water from June 26-28, 2015. Operation Dry Water is a national outreach and enforcement campaign with the goal of raising awareness of the dangers of boating under the influence. Annually, Operation Dry Water facilitates a three-day weekend of heightened awareness and enforcement of DWI laws. This campaign takes places nationally and is made possible through the efforts of local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. Last year LDWF agents issued five DWI citations during that weekend.

LDWF will also be hosting two Summer Day Camps from June 22-26 and July 20-24, 2015. The camps are held in Baton Rouge at the Waddill Outdoor Education Center free of charge for kids 12 to 16 years old. At the camp each child will receive the boating and hunting education courses, hands on fishing, shooting and boating instructions, free daily lunches, and a free rod and reel combo donated by Cabella’s of Gonzales. LDWF will select participants for the camps that have not completed a boater’s or hunter’s education course and those that have the least amount of hunting, fishing and boating experience.

# Interstate Duck Hunting

*Sgt. Frank Reger contributed to this article.*

LDWF agents are used to working in concealed areas deep in the woods or remote bayous of the state to catch poachers. However, they usually don't see people brave enough to hunt right off a main interstate or populated area.

That's exactly what they saw when Sgt. Troy Parker and Sgt. Frank Reger were traveling on Interstate 49 on the day before opening day of duck season in 2014. The agents observed a pond about 100 yards off the interstate that was loaded with ducks.

"I have to admit that the large quantity of ducks would normally have me wanting to be there to check for over limits and bait but I thought nobody would be so daring to break the game laws in the view of everyone," said Reger. "After a brief discussion Sgt. Parker and I decided we would start our shift out there the next morning."

The next morning Parker and Lt. Schufft approached the pond from the south and Reger made his approach from the north. In their concealed positions, the agents felt the odds were good that people might hunt this pond since the weather was favorable for duck hunting.

As legal shooting time came, the agents heard the sound of shotguns. Shots were constant for about an hour, and the ducks were falling. The hunters had no idea that agents were watching their every move.

"We could tell there were several hunters, but could not tell the exact number of hunters in the blind," said Reger. "One of the hunters exited the blind and began to walk the edges of the pond getting ducks to jump off the water and shooting them."

The agents watched for an hour when the hunters stopped shooting and began loading up to leave. Schufft and Parker could see several ducks still lying on the water and watched one of the hunters pick up a duck and then throw it back down.

"We decided to let the hunters get all the way back to their vehicles where I would check them while Lt. Schufft and Sgt. Parker would search the field for any bait and ducks. Even from just watching them we knew we probably had at least a wanton waste charge," said Reger. "I made contact with the four suspects at their vehicles and they had exactly 24 ducks."

During Parker and Schufft's inspection of the edge of the pond they found seven more ducks bringing the total to 31, which put the four hunters seven over their legal limit of 24, or six ducks per person. During Reger's inspection of the ducks he already had found the four hunters in possession of more than the two redheads allowed per hunter.

The agents issued all four suspects citations for taking over the limit of ducks and wanton waste of migratory game birds. Agents then gave the hunters the opportunity to admit or claim any other ducks that were left on the pond. They all stated that they did not leave



anything else on the pond.

"Being the suspicious agents we all are, we donned our waders and made our way out to the duck blind," said Reger. "We found three more ducks around the edge of the blind. After I exited the blind, I noticed some feathers under the brush of the blind. I moved the brush and discovered four more ducks bringing the total number of ducks killed to 38."

The agents then tacked on an intentional concealment of wildlife charge to the other citations. The four men each face up to \$2,850 in fines and 360 days in jail for the duck hunting offenses. They could also face up to \$825 in civil restitution for the replacement value of the ducks killed.



# Boating Safety Experience and Training Pays Off for Region 2 Agent

*Sgt. Wayne Parker contributed to this article.*

With the ever changing roles of the LDWF Enforcement Division, the men and women in uniform have had to adapt from the former “Game Warden” title to a more broad scope of “Agent.” LDWF agents still perform the basic tasks of ecosystem enforcement, but have also branched out into other roles such as search and rescue, maritime security and drug and alcohol enforcement.

Agents patrolling the woods and waterways sometimes come across illegal drug activity or alcohol use such as an impaired operator of a boat or a meth lab in the woods. Some agents are being recognized for these changing roles.

Two such agents are LDWF’s Sgt. Scott Bullitt of the Region 2 Office in Monroe and Sgt. Toby Miller of the Region 7 Office in Baton Rouge. Both received the “Louisiana Highway Safety Commission DWI Award” presented on March 24. Bullitt and Miller were each selected among statewide agents to receive this award due to their dedication and hard work to make Louisiana waterways and roadways safer for the traveling public by removing impaired drivers.

Bullitt credits this achievement to the extensive training he received from the LDWF Enforcement Division and the opportunity to attend the Drug Evaluation and Classification Training program.

Bullitt began his law career with his acceptance into the LDWF Enforcement Division Training Academy in September 2009. While attending the academy Bullitt was taught the tools needed for DWI detection and enforcement, becoming certified to administer standard field sobriety tests. During his career Bullitt has participated in programs such as “Operation Dry Water,” which promotes zero tolerance for impaired boat operators during the last weekend in June. He also is proactive in DWI detection and enforcement on Louisiana waterways and roadways.

In April 2014 Bullitt was selected to attend the National Highway Traffic Safety Association Drug Evaluation and Classification Training to become a Drug Recognition Expert. The program enables police officers who are certified as Drug Recognition Experts (DRE) to determine whether a suspect is under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs and, if so, what category of drugs, by combining basic medical knowledge about drug pharmacodynamics with validated psychophysical tests.

The drug evaluation and classification process is standardized and systematic. It utilizes a variety of readily observable signs and symptoms that are accepted in the medical community as reliable indicators of drug influence. During a DRE examination, the DRE takes the suspect’s brief medical history and assesses the suspect’s pulse, blood pressure, body temperature, pupil size and reaction to



light, and psychophysical function. The DRE also examines the suspect’s ocular tracking, smooth pursuit and Horizontal and Vertical Gaze Nystagmus.

To receive this certification, Bullitt successfully completed 74 hours of classroom training, which included an overview of the drug evaluation procedures, expanded sessions on each of the seven drug categories, drug combinations, examination of vital signs, case preparation, and courtroom testimony.

Bullitt was also required to complete a minimum of 12 drug evaluations under the supervision of a trained instructor. Of the 12 evaluations, he had to identify at least three of the seven drug categories and obtain a minimum of 75 percent toxicological corroboration rate. After successfully completing the extensive training and a final knowledge test, Bullitt received his DRE certification.

“To most people DWI is commonly associated with alcohol,” said Region 2 Capt. Rick Owens. “But alcohol is just one of countless substances that can impair one’s ability to operate a motor vehicle. It is important to have agents like Sgt. Bullitt that are highly trained to detect other substances that can impair an operator.”

Driving under the influence of drugs including prescription medications, large amounts of over the counter medication, as well as illegal drugs can also result in DWI charges. One must also keep in mind doctor’s orders are no defense to drugged driving. Prescription medication is being abused more now than in the past, and illegal drugs are becoming more readily available to people of all ages.

“As a DRE, Sgt. Bullitt puts the knowledge he has gained to not only identify impaired vessel operators, but most of all keep our roadways and waterways safe from those impaired who pose a safety risk to themselves and others,” said Owens

# Repeat Wildlife Offender Caught Numerous Times in Region 3

*Sgt. Trey Mason contributed to this story.*

Every region of the state seems to have their own repeat offenders of wildlife and fisheries laws. Most of the times these repeat offenders are called “outlaws.”

Beginning in 2011 Region 3 agents in Concordia Parish began receiving an overwhelming amount of complaints on a particular outlaw who was later identified as Duell S. Moreland. These complaints consisted of but were not limited to taking deer during illegal hours, taking over the legal limit of deer, trespassing, narcotics use and selling deer meat.

Through thorough investigations and patrolling the areas, Region 3 agents were able to apprehend Moreland and charge him with the following in 2011:

- Failing to comply with deer tagging requirements (13 counts)
- Hunting without a resident license
- Hunting from a moving vehicle (3 counts)
- Not abiding by WMA rules & regulations (3 counts transport loaded firearm in vehicle)
- Possessing over the limit of deer (13 deer)
- Hunting deer during illegal hours (3 counts)
- Discharging a firearm from a public road (3 counts)
- No driver's license
- Illegal possession of marijuana
- Not filling out a self-clearing permit on a WMA
- Possession of illegal firearm during small game season
- Hunting on a WMA without a WMA hunting permit
- Possession of an alcoholic beverage by a person under 21

“As this case cleared, agents continued to receive numerous complaints on this outlaw committing the same acts,” said Sgt. Trey Mason. “I caught up with Moreland in January of 2013 and cited him for hunting deer using illegal methods, failing to wear hunters orange, failing to comply with deer tagging requirements, and hunting without resident hunting and big game licenses.”

In October 2013 Region 3 Senior Agent Joey Merrill was on patrol and received notification from an LDWF biologist about a tagged bear's mortality signal going off in Concordia Parish (the bear was a part of LDWF's Black Bear program). Merrill along with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) agents Mark Cupit and John Tarver located the carcass of a dead bear that had been set on fire as an apparent attempt to dispose of the evidence.

“After a thorough investigation, agents were able to identify the culprit as none other than Duell Moreland,” said Mason. “We found out that he shot and killed the bear with a cross bow and burned the bear.”

Moreland was later arrested for this violation, posted bond and is still awaiting trial. He is facing up to a \$10,000 civil restitution fee plus up to \$50,000 in fines.

While out on bond for the illegal black bear killing, agents began receiving ongoing complaints about Moreland taking deer during illegal hours along with numerous other violations.

In January 2014 Mason along with Cupit (USFWS) were patrolling on Bayou Cocodrie National Wildlife Refuge at night. While on patrol, Mason and Cupit observed a light being shined in a searching manner on an ATV trail.

“We travelled in the direction of this light with the aid of night vision. A short period later we found the subject and again identified him as Moreland,” said Mason. “We found him carrying a loaded cross bow equipped with a night vision scope along with a .444 primitive rifle on his shoulder.”

“We then gave Moreland numerous loud verbal commands to stop and identified ourselves as law enforcement officers. Moreland then fled the scene on foot and we were able to quickly apprehend him.”

The agents found Moreland in possession of marijuana along with another subject's hunting license. Moreland was again booked into jail for the following charges:

- Using another's recreational hunting license
- Hunting deer with illegal methods
- Using firearm/archery with illegal electric sights
- Hunting deer during illegal hours
- Failing to comply with deer tagging or harvest record requirements
- Illegal possession of marijuana (second offense)
- Resisting an officer
- Possession of marijuana while in possession of a firearm

The following are federal violations:

- Hunting from an ATV trail
- Failing to possess an annual public use permit
- Trespassing on a National Wildlife Refuge
- Spotlighting on a National Wildlife Refuge

On Nov. 14, 2014 Moreland was sentenced in 7th Judicial District Court by Judge Kathy Johnson to 60 months of hard labor with 40 months suspended and to a 15-year hunting ban. Moreland is still awaiting sentencing for the alleged federal violations.







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**Boat safe. Boat sober.  
Louisiana.**





# LDWF Agents Pass on Enjoyment of Outdoors Tradition

*Many people do not realize how diverse an LDWF agent's career can be. Agents do so much more than check fishing licenses or catch illegal night hunters.*

*Senior Agent Channing Duvall contributed to this article.*

From searching for evidence in a drug-related case to stopping outlaws from littering this beautiful state to rescuing lives from devastating hurricanes, LDWF Enforcement Division agents have seen and done it all.

All of these duties can make for an exciting career and according to one such Region 4 agent "quite possibly the best career in the world."

"I love my job," said Senior Agent Channing Duvall.

Duvall said he is often approached by young men in high school who want to know how they can get on with the Enforcement Division. He said that every boy who loves to hunt and fish wants to be an LDWF agent.

"Recently, I was asked by a cadet applicant, 'Do y'all ever become tired of fishing and hunting? After all, you deal with it all year long,'" said Duvall. "My response is always the same. Never! My love for the great outdoors is part of my heart and soul."

Duvall's earliest memories are those of tent camping in the swamps of St. Landry Parish with his mom and dad. When he was a boy he would also go camping the first weekend of squirrel season with his father, grandfather and great grandfather.

"There we were, four living generations, carrying on the traditions of generations before us. I loved it because they loved it," said Duvall. "These traditions made such an impression on me that I decided to be a wildlife and fisheries agent when I was in high school."

Now that Duvall is a parent of three boys and two girls he realizes how the seeds of tradition need to be planted early. Today he is the one passing on the tradition of hunting, fishing and respect for this Sportsman's Paradise in Louisiana.

"My kids and I love to spend time in the great outdoors hunting, fishing or camping," said Duvall. "I try to create opportunities for them to learn firsthand the responsibility we have in conserving our natural resources."

Duvall said he always practices safety rules with his kids like wearing the right life jacket or making sure your tree climbing safety harness is functioning as it should. At a very early age, his kids are learning to bait hooks, the proper handling of firearms, and that the woods should be left the way they are found, without littering.

"It's the little things that I love most. Like making sure my little girls get to reel in their own catch or that my boys get in just the right position to shoot a deer or a pig," said Duvall. "There is nothing more pleasing to me than to see the look on my children's faces when one of the boys has taken a deer or squirrel. It's almost as good as killing my own 10-point buck."

Duvall believes that our youth can't learn to appreciate the traditions of the outdoors if they are never a part of them.

"My children are still young and there are still many memories to be made, but I can say with certainty that these traditions and the love of hunting or fishing will not end with their generation," he emphasized.





# Enforcement Division's Role in the WHOOPING CRANE PROJECT

*The LDWF Enforcement Division believes in conserving, protecting and restoring all of Louisiana's native species. They back up their beliefs by enforcing laws that protect these species. One of those species is the whooping crane.*

*Lt. Jesse Savoie contributed to this article.*

Louisiana was home to whooping cranes until 1950. In an effort to restore and re-establish a whooping crane population, LDWF began reintroducing whooping cranes starting in 2011.

LDWF is working cooperatively with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the International Crane Foundation (ICF), and the Louisiana Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit to restore the whooping crane within Louisiana.

LDWF has released 64 whooping cranes since 2011 and are currently tracking 40 whooping cranes. The reintroduced whooping cranes came from the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, Md., and they were initially placed in a release pen in the coastal marsh of Vermilion Parish within LDWF's White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area (WCA).

This re-introduced population marked the first presence of whooping cranes in the wild in Louisiana since 1950. This non-migratory flock of whooping cranes is designated as a non-essential, experimental population but is protected under state law, the Endangered Species Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Whooping cranes, the most endangered of all of the world's crane species, were first listed as an endangered species on March 11, 1967.

"Essential to the overall success of the LDWF whooping crane project is the cooperative working relationship between Region 5 Enforcement Division agents and the LDWF biologists assigned to manage the project and monitor the movement of the whooping cranes," said Lt. Jesse Savoie.

Each re-introduced whooping crane is fitted with a tracking device that utilizes satellite technology. Since 2011, LDWF biologists have documented the movement of the re-introduced whooping cranes in and out of the White Lake WCA.

"Since 2011, monitoring and documentation reveal the movement of the cranes into the outlying parishes of Allen, Acadia, Evangeline and Jefferson Davis on a consistent basis," said Savoie. "The whooping cranes have been documented ranging as far north as Rapides and Franklin parishes."

On a weekly basis, a LDWF biologist sends geographical data to the Region 5 Enforcement Office indicating the most recent locations of the whooping cranes.

"This information is important to our agents who correspondingly patrol the last known locations of the whooping cranes," said Savoie. "During these patrols agents interact with farmers, hunters and other user groups who have the potential to impact whooping cranes due to their activities."

Since 2011, enforcement agents have conducted four different investigations involving the shooting of a total of six whooping cranes with three of those investigations involving five of the cranes occurring in Region 5. LDWF has investigated two whooping cranes that were shot in Jefferson Davis Parish in October 2011, one crane that was shot in Red River Parish in April 2013, another two cranes that were shot in Jefferson Davis Parish in February 2014, and one crane that was shot in November 2014 in Vermilion Parish.

During the investigations agents made three arrests resulting in the prosecution of two of the subjects.

The open cases are offering rewards of up to \$20,000 to the public for information that leads to the conviction of the individual(s) responsible for the shooting of the whooping cranes recovered in the unsolved investigations. People who have information on any illegal whooping crane shooting can call LDWF's Operation Game Thief hotline at 1-800-442-2511 or use the tip411 app on a smart-phone. To use the tip411 program, tipsters can text LADWF and their tip to 847411 or download the "LADWF Tips" iPhone and Android apps from the iTunes or Google Play store free of charge.

"Enforcing the regulations that protect these birds will certainly help in their chance of reestablishing a healthy population in Louisiana," said Savoie. "We are very mindful of these birds' presence in our region and are doing everything we can ensure their survival."



## LDWF Enforcement Region 6

# Public Tip Leads to Catching Repeat Duck Hunting Violator



*Senior Agent Dean Aucoin contributed to this article.*

LDWF agents are continually working to protect the valuable resources of the state by enforcing the regulations that aim to protect outdoor resources for future generations. Agents are constantly patrolling every parish for criminal activity involving the state's ecosystem.

A lot of cases are made by general patrols, but in many cases it is information provided by the public that assist agents.

As the 2014-2015 Louisiana duck season approached, agents around the state start gaining information on areas that may contain illegal activity during the upcoming hunting season. Region 6 Lt. Jeff Boyd received a complaint on a subject and relayed that information to Region 6 Senior Agent Dean Aucoin.

"Lt. Boyd advised me that a subject by the name of Lloyd Badeaux, who I was familiar with due to prior wildlife violations, was going to be hunting during the upcoming hunting season near Dularge," said Aucoin. "The complainant advised Lt. Boyd that Mr. Badeaux was still on probation and could not hunt for three years due to his prior wildlife conviction in Federal Court."

Aucoin along with agents Thomas Wolf, Stephen Rhodes and Sgt. Thomas Dewitt had cited Badeaux for taking over the limit of ducks



during the 2011-2012 hunting season. On Jan. 18, 2012 while on patrol, Wolf and Aucoin heard several shotgun shots coming from an area just outside of Houma.

“We went to the location and discovered that Mr. Badeaux was in possession of 50 freshly killed black bellied whistling tree ducks, six mallards and one domesticated Egyptian goose,” said Aucoin. “We issued Mr. Badeaux a federal citation for taking over the daily limit of ducks.”

In April of 2013, Badeaux pleaded guilty in federal court to the charge and was fined \$5,010 and placed on three years of probation with no hunting.

One week prior to the season opening, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) officer advised LDWF agents on the exact location where Badeaux would be hunting for the upcoming opening. Agents went to the possible hunting location and discovered a newly built duck blind in the area.

LDWF agents and USFWS officers set up surveillance on the camp that Badeaux would possibly be staying the night before the hunt. They also set up surveillance near the duck blind in a vessel in case Badeaux he showed up to hunt.

“Well as many cases go, I found myself being awakened by the alarm clock at 1 in the morning to begin the daily duties as an agent on another opening day of duck season,” said Aucoin. “We launched our vessel in Houma and made the long run to Dularge where we were met by a USFWS officer. While waiting near the duck blind, we were contacted by the agents at the camp that a subject had woken inside the camp and was sitting on the porch drinking coffee.”

At around that time the undercover USFWS officers contacted the agents near the duck blind, the coffee drinker was picked up by another subject on a four wheeler and was headed toward the duck blind.

Approximately an hour into observing the two subjects in the duck blind, the USFWS officers advised the LDWF agents that they had visual on the subjects and confirmed that both subjects were hunting. The LDWF agents in the boat along with the USFWS officer then made contact with the two subjects in the duck blind to conduct a license check.

“As we approached the blind, I was able to see that in fact it was Mr. Badeaux who was in the duck blind,” said Aucoin. “(LDWF) Agent Rhodes asked to see their hunting licenses and shotguns so they could be checked for compliance. At that time Mr. Badeaux produced a valid license and his shotgun, which was loaded with shotgun shells. We also found that Mr. Badeaux and his hunting partner were in possession of lead shot shells while they were hunting migratory game birds.”

After talking with the subjects for a while Aucoin identified himself to Badeaux and advised him that he was aware about his probation for prior duck violations and how he could not hunt while on probation. Badeaux and his hunting partner were in possession of one scaup and one mottled duck. Agents then issued Badeaux a federal citation for violating non-toxic shot requirements and violation of his federal probation. His hunting partner was issued a citation for violating non-toxic shot requirements.

On March 10, 2015, Badeaux found himself again in federal court in reference to his recently issued federal hunting violations. Badeaux pleaded guilty to the charges and was fined \$560 for violating non-



toxic shot requirements and sentenced to serve 30 days in jail for violating his hunting ban from the previous hunting conviction.

“As an agent we always have to adjust and adapt to new things we may encounter in the field,” said Aucoin. “It was fulfilling that we as agents were able to cite him for this violation based off of loyal outdoorsman who were willing to speak out about Mr. Badeauxs wrong doing. Without information received from sportsman in the field Mr. Badeaux may have never been caught illegally hunting.”

# Region 7 Takes DWI Award Seventh Year in a Row

*Capt. Len Yokum contributed to this article.*

Each of the eight LDWF Enforcement Division regions across the state has their own intricacies when patrolling the woods and waterways. For Region 7, which consists of West and East Feliciana, Saint Helena, East Baton Rouge, Livingston, Ascension, Tangipahoa and Washington parishes, recreational boating and waterway safety patrols take precedent during the spring and summer and into the fall.

“On these patrols we are looking for vessels that may be operating recklessly or in an unsafe manner,” said Region 7 Capt. Len Yokum. “More specifically making sure everybody is following the personal flotation device regulations and that they have a sober operator.”

For the seventh consecutive year Region 7 was awarded the driving or operating a vessel while intoxicated (DWI) Law Enforcement Award by the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission. This award is given to the LDWF region with the most DWIs made by LDWF agents for the year.

In 2014, Region 7 agents made 31 DWIs. Region 7 contains a lot of recreational waterways with prevalent alcohol use by boaters.

“These are the most heavily travelled waterways in the state for recreational boaters and have several bars that are only accessible by boat,” said Capt. Yokum. “We mainly patrol the highly trafficked areas where known alcohol use occurs such as Amite River Diversion Canal, Blind River, Tickfaw River, Tangipahoa River, Natalbany River as well as Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Maurepas.”

The Louisiana Highway Commission also gives awards to State Police, Sheriff’s Offices and police officers who make the most DWIs in their department. Region 7’s Sgt. Toby Miller and Region 2’s Senior Agent Scott Bullit were tied with 15 DWIs each and received the award on March 24 on behalf of the LDWF Enforcement Division.

Miller has received this award three times matching Region 7’s Sgt. Randy Lanoux for the most in the LDWF Enforcement Division.

“The entire state takes DWI enforcement very seriously since it is usually one of the leading causes of fatalities for boating incidents,” said Yokum. “We feel this stricter DWI enforcement along with stricter personal flotation device regulations and boating safety classes has helped lead to lower boating fatality numbers these past couple of years.”



The LDWF Enforcement Division has reported a record low of boating fatalities the past two years with 15 fatalities in 2013 and 14 in 2014. During this same time frame, Region 7 has seen the number of DWIs go down as well from 50 and 71 in 2010 and 2011 to 31 in 2014.

“Our guys are still out patrolling the highly trafficked areas like we always have, but finding an impaired operator is just getting harder to find,” said Yokum. “That is good news as the public is doing a great job of being responsible on the waterways and having designated operators. We want people to have fun, but we also want them to return home safe.”

Alcohol consumption impairs a boater’s judgment, balance, vision and reaction time. Alcohol also increases fatigue and susceptibility to hypothermia. Intensifying the effects of alcohol are sun, wind, noise, vibration and movement, which are all common to boating activities.

The penalties for DWI on the water are the same as on the road. Anyone cited for a DWI on the water or on the road will lose his or her driver’s license and boating privileges for the specified time ordered by the judge in the case.

In Louisiana a DWI can be issued to anyone operating a moving vessel or vehicle with a blood alcohol concentration of .08 or higher. First offense DWI on the water or on the road carries a \$300 to \$1,000 fine and up to six months in jail. Second offense DWI brings a \$750 to \$1,000 fine and between 30 days and six months in jail. Third offense DWI carries a \$5,000 fine and between one and five years in jail.



# OYSTER VIOLATIONS on The Half Shell

*Sgt. Adam Young contributed to this article.*

Positive legislative steps and stellar local prosecution have paved the road to successful oyster prosecution in recent years in St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes.

The norm in the past for habitual line steppers of oyster rules and regulations, up to and including theft from oyster leases, and taking oysters from polluted waters closed by the Department of Health and Hospitals has been a slap on the hand and out the door they go. This problem was not anyone's fault in the court system, but rather a problem with the revised statutes written in black and white. LDWF agents had their hands tied.

"Paying a \$450 fine for taking oysters in polluted areas and threatening the general public's health just wasn't cutting it when a violator is making double and triple that to break the law and take a chance," said Sgt. Adam Young. "The oyster industry saw this and decided to unite as one and update the penalties."

Starting in 2013 the first offense for taking oysters from a closed area moved up to a class six penalty calling for a max fine of \$950. However it doesn't stop at just the fines. Fishermen who take oysters from a closed area will also lose their harvester's license and be required to have a vessel monitoring system (VMS) on any vessel they are on while fishing or even possessing oysters or gear to take oysters.

Add to that community service of 40 hours for a first offense and you have a penalty that will deter. Also, for the first time polluted oyster penalties are graduated offenses where the sentence gets worse with every conviction, much like a driving while intoxicated conviction does.

Since 2013 the Plaquemines Parish court system, with the assistance of the district attorney and LDWF agents, has sentenced eight fishermen with extensive prior oyster violations on file to no less than one year of VMS requirements plus extensive fines.

"One fisherman even lost his commercial fishing privileges all together for two years and another has severe sanctions including license revocation, and VMS requirements for five years," said Young. "One theft case involving night time oyster activity in Port Sulphur resulted in \$5,000 in fines and loss of licenses and gear that was seized was forfeited to the department to be destroyed."

In St. Bernard Parish in 2015 a habitual oyster thief out of Hopedale was caught numerous times by agents and even arrested. He was placed on a VMS order for one year. Less than six months later he was caught violating his court order and the judge revoked his probation and sentenced him to 60 days in jail.



"With the oyster industry stepping forward and the monumental help we have received from the state's legislature, district judges and district attorneys, the word is out that the tide has changed on people who take it upon themselves to constantly break oyster laws. This change was needed," said Young.

The oyster industry could not support the threat to legal fishermen by placing a tainted product on the market and threatening innocent people's health. It also could not support oyster thieves who infringe on the countless man hours that fishermen endure to prepare their leases legally for years to come.

"Shucking up these offenders is long overdue and a welcome change to the oyster industry and to the efforts of LDWF'S Enforcement Division Agents statewide," reiterated Young.

# Permanent Blind on WMA Leads to Permanent Conviction

*Senior Agent Michael Marques contributed for this article.*

LDWF tries to manage the state's wildlife management areas (WMAs) so that each member of the public has equal access. During the high peak hunting season, this equal access can be challenged by those who want to try and reserve their own permanent hunting spot. One of the ways hunters try to do this is by building and then concealing a permanent blind for duck hunting.

The LDWF regulations state that construction of a permanent hunting stand or blind is prohibited on any WMA and if found will be destroyed.

Two Louisiana men from last year's duck hunting season tried to skirt this regulation by building a permanent blind in Smith Bay located inside the Grassy Lake WMA in Avoyelles Parish.

On Saturday, Sept. 13, 2014, Senior Agent Michael Marques and Senior Agent Ronnie Engelhard obtained a complaint about a permanent blind on the Grassy Lake WMA. As the agents began their investigation they were aware that only one public road, Bayou Natchitoches Road, was available for anyone to access Smith Bay. Private camps along this road are used by the local hunters to gain a quick and direct route to Smith Bay.

The agents learned that the local hunters had their own "spots" in Smith Bay, which were regarded as their duck hunting territory. The agents also realized that when any state issued vehicle and uniformed agent is spotted, the local hunters would call each to notify others that an agent is in the area.

The agents were also able to locate the permanent blind described in the complaint that appeared to have been used for several years, had a plywood floor and old vegetation for the outer walls.

"We began to work on a plan to be able to access the permanent blind without being seen by the local hunters," said Marques. "We used an unmarked unit and camouflage covers over our uniforms to avoid detection as enforcement agents."

The agent's plan was to occupy the permanent blind and pose as duck hunters to ascertain if the hunters would lay claim to the permanent blind. Agents did not see any recent work on the blind and no one showed up to use the area on Sept. 27 or 28.

On Nov. 21, 2014, Marques and Engelhard continued their investigation and documented that new construction was underway. The opening of duck season was to begin on Nov. 22.

"We believed that the individuals building the permanent blind were likely to use it on opening day," said Marques.

On opening day at 3:30 a.m. the agents arrived at the permanent blind and documented that it was completely remodeled. The blind was approximately 10 feet by 10 feet. The roof was built with a bamboo ceiling and a canvas tarp on top of the bamboo to keep the hunters dry.

At approximately 6:05 a.m. the agents observed a hand tillered outboard engine vessel with two men enter the hunting area. The agents noted that neither of the men were wearing life jackets. The subject operating the vessel, later identified as Thomas E. Kimble Jr., 44, of Bordelonville, noticed the agent's unmarked boat directly next to the blind.

"They slowed down and passed in front of the blind. We were both looking out of the blind at the two subjects as they passed," said Marques.

During a brief conversation between Kimble Jr. and the undercover agents, Kimble Jr. made it very clear that he and his accomplice were going to do whatever was necessary to regain possession of the permanent blind. After putting out some decoys in front of the blind, Kimble Jr. drove his vessel into the immediate area near the blind with the two undercover agents inside.

Once inside the blind Marques asked Kimble Jr. if this was his blind and Kimble Jr. said, "yes this is my blind." After recognizing one of the undercover agents he immediately began yelling, "this ain't my blind! This ain't my blind!"

The agents then identified themselves to both subjects and stated that it is a violation to build a permanent blind on any WMA. At this time Bryan M. Babin, 50, of Youngsville, was identified as a passenger in the vessel, and he later admitted to helping build the blind.

Once the hunting compliance check was completed, the agents conducted a boating safety compliance check. Agents found that Kimble Jr. was in violation for operating a vessel without making sure everyone was wearing a personal flotation device (PFD). PFDs are required to be worn on his 15-foot hand tillered vessel while underway. Agents also found that Kimble Jr. did not have enough PFDs for each person on board or a required fire extinguisher.

"We advised the men that the general public has the right on public land to enjoy their hunting experience free from unreasonable and deliberate interference from others hunting on public land," said Marques.

The agents issued both men citation for constructing a permanent blind on a WMA. Agents also issued Kimble Jr. citations for harassment of persons hunting, failing to comply with PFD regulations, failing to comply with PFD requirements for class A tiller outboard, and for not possessing a fire extinguisher on board.

The men were found guilty in January. Kimble Jr. paid a \$355 fine plus a \$100 donation to the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation (LWFF). Babin paid a \$150 fine plus a \$100 donation to the LWFF.





# Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Law Enforcement Division

The Law Enforcement Division is responsible for enforcing laws enacted by the Louisiana Legislature relative to fish and wildlife resources and boating safety regulations, as well as federal regulations pertaining to migratory birds and endangered species.

## LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION GOALS

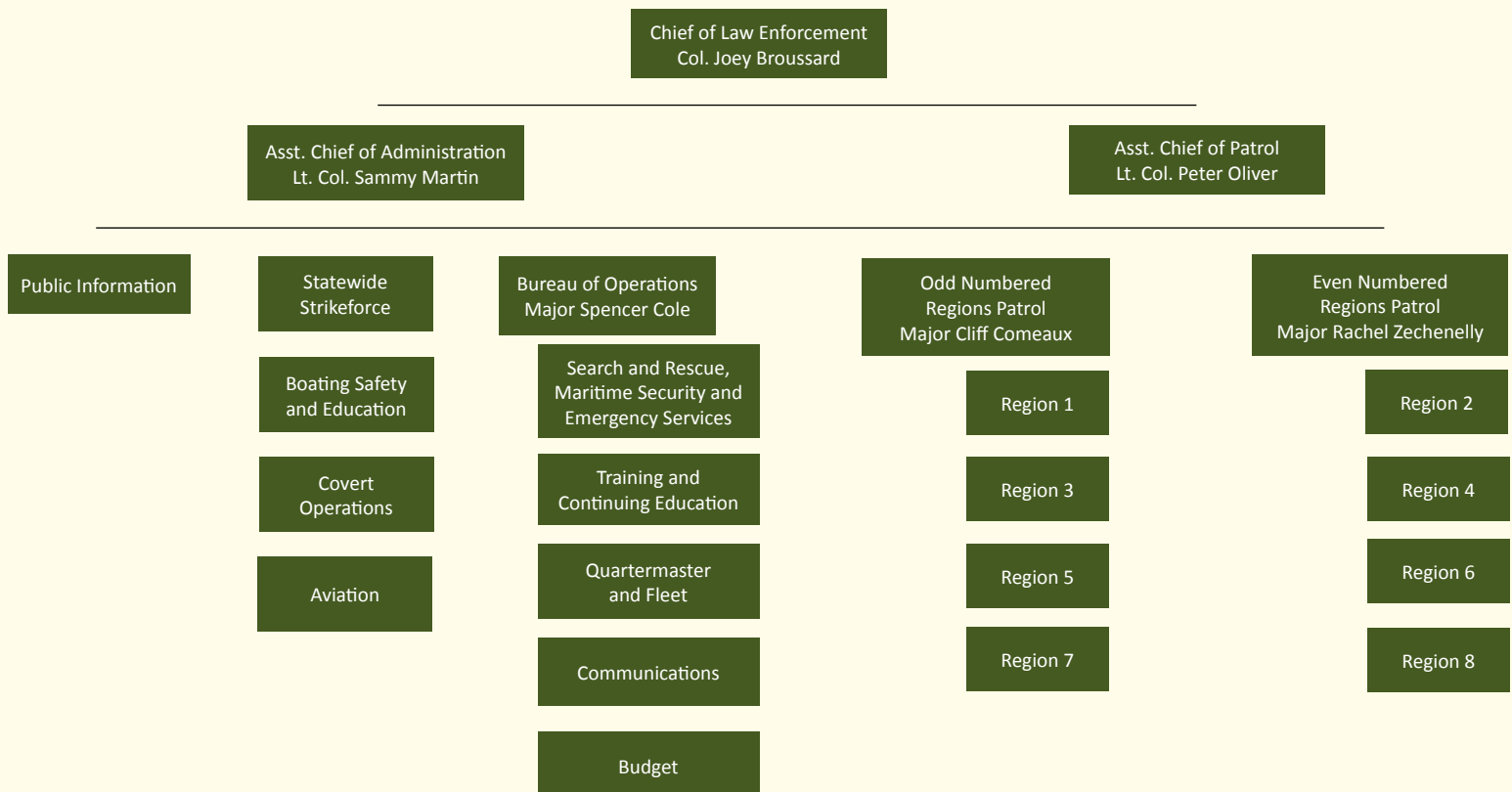
- Support Natural Resource Preservation by enhancing the front line enforcement component by increasing participation, voluntary compliance with laws, regulations, and programs related to wildlife and fisheries use, protection, management and conservation. Optimize patrol efforts with professional law enforcement personnel and public interactions of those participating in wildlife and fishery and eco-tourism activities, by monitoring compliant activity, providing information and supporting sound use of our states ecosystems.
- Advance Crime and Safety Reform by protecting Louisianans of all ages from life-threatening criminal activities when they are involved in recreational and commercial activities on the state's waterways. Provide professional law enforcement personnel throughout our state's waterways maintaining sufficient boating safety and waterway enforcement patrols, education, expanding training initiatives to law enforcement partners and proactive community policing programs to reduce illegal and dangerous operation of vessels on the state's waterways.
- Maintain adequate professional man-power and equipment to support Hurricane Recovery and Emergency Preparedness by planning, training, coordinating local, state and federal response for search and rescue associated with natural or manmade disasters. Preparedness and efficient execution of search and rescue response events is essential to saving lives and swift recovery efforts. Continue to build on the LDWF/LED maritime overall capabilities to optimize maritime security on our states waterways protecting the states critical infrastructure located in maritime environments throughout the state.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Law Enforcement Division (LDWF/LED) is a fully commissioned statewide law enforcement agency with the primary mission of protecting Louisiana's natural resources and serving the people who utilize them. Beyond the traditional role of ensuring compliance with licensing and harvesting regulations, LDWF/LED also conducts search and rescue missions, enforces boating safety laws, investigates boating and hunting accidents and provides boater education classes for thousands of citizens each year.

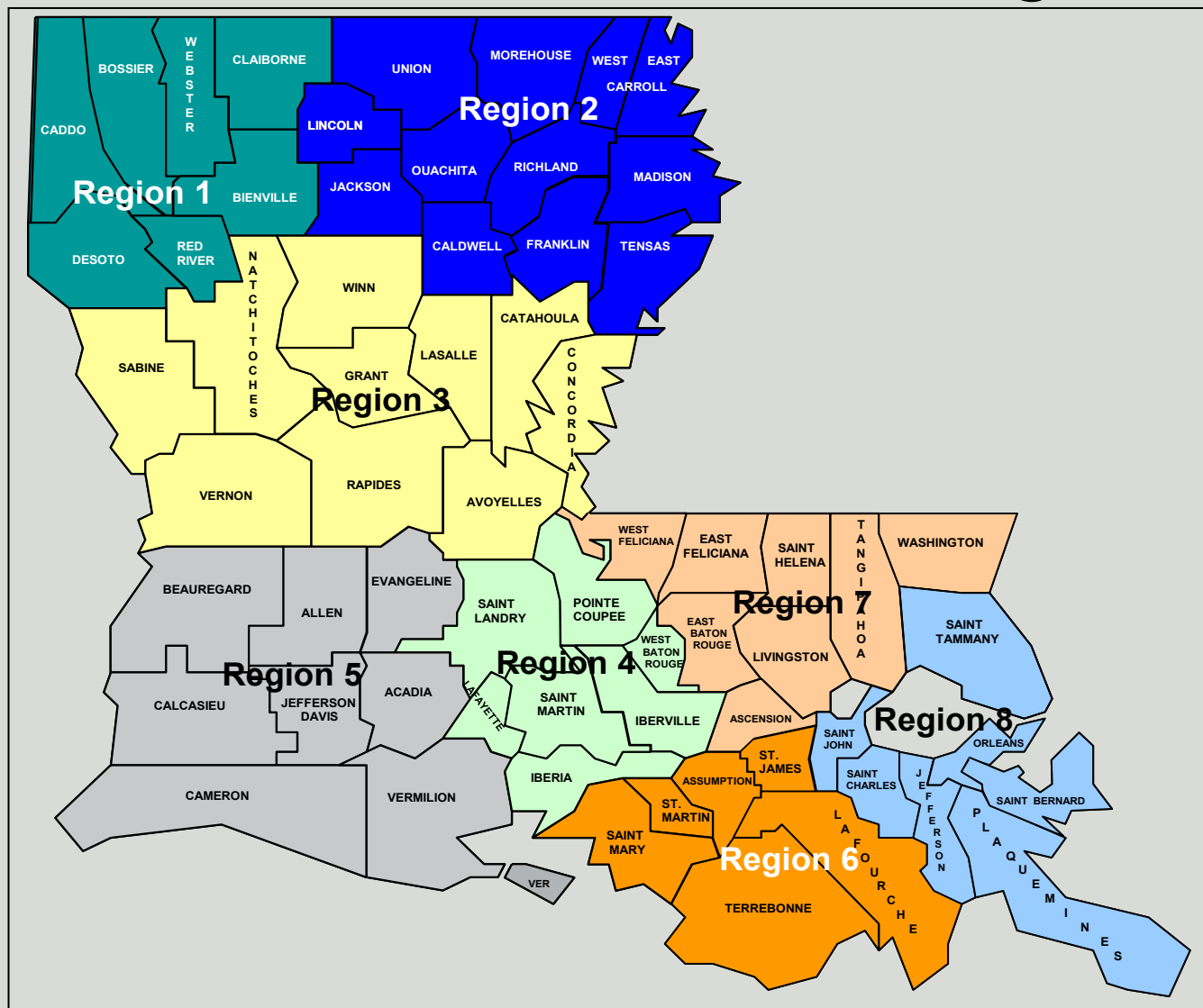
## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE & PERSONNEL

LDWF/LED is organized in a paramilitary structure to assure the efficient use of resources, consistent statewide enforcement policy and an effective, coordinated response to urgent needs (chart on right). LDWF/LED is commanded by one colonel, the Chief of Enforcement, who reports directly to LDWF's Secretary. Reporting to the colonel are two lieutenant colonels: one supervising search and rescue and field operations; and one overseeing administration of the division and maritime security, operations of the Aviation Section, and serving as LDWF's legislative liaison and boating law administrator. The Enforcement Division is divided up into eight regions across the state and headquarters in Baton Rouge.

Total division head count is 257 positions, including 235 enforcement agents and 24 civilian professionals, clerical staff, six communications officers and two pilots. The actual number of filled agent positions (as of December 2012) is 206.



# LDWF Law Enforcement Regions



**Enforcement Information Hotline**  
**1-800-256-2749**



LDWF Enforcement Headquarters Agents



LDWF Enforcement Aviation

LDWF Enforcement Headquarters - Baton Rouge Office: 225-765-2989





**LDWF Enforcement Region 1 - Minden Office: 318-371-3049**  
(Captain: Richie McCarthy; Administration Assistant: Daphne Clements)



**LDWF Enforcement Region 2/Monroe Office - 318-343-2417**  
(Captain: Rick Owens; Administration Assistant: Taaka Willis)



**LDWF Enforcement Region 3/Pineville Office - 318-487-5634**  
(Captain: Curtis Belton; Administration Assistant: Robyn Cutts)





**LDWF Enforcement Region 4 Agents**

**LDWF Enforcement Region 4 - Opelousas Office: 337-948-0257**  
(Captain: Donald Salpietra; Administration Assistant: Tina Faul)



**LDWF Enforcement Region 5 Agents**

**LDWF Enforcement Region 5 - Lake Charles Office: 337-491-2588**  
(Captain: Robert Buatt; Administration Assistant: Cindy Pippin)



**LDWF Enforcement Region 6 Agents**

**LDWF Enforcement Region 6 - Thibodaux Office: 985-447-0821**  
(Captain: Chuck Comeaux; Administration Assistant: Elaine Moore)





**LDWF Enforcement Region 7 Agents**

**LDWF Enforcement Region 7 - Baton Rouge Office: 225-765-2999**  
*(Captain: Len Yokum; Administration Assistant: Britnee Batts)*



**LDWF Enforcement Region 8 Agents**

**LDWF Enforcement Region 8 - New Orleans Office: 504-284-2023**  
*(Captain: Steve McManus; Administration Assistant: Sennetta Bell)*



**LDWF Enforcement Strike Force Agents**

**LDWF Enforcement Strike Force**  
*(Captain: Chad Hebert; Administration Assistant: Gretchen Dietz)*

## BEHIND THE BADGE

Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries

Law Enforcement Division

P.O. Box 98000

Baton Rouge, LA 70898

# OPERATION GAME THIEF

*Two Ways to Report Wildlife Violations*

## CALL

### 1-800-442-2511

LDWF's 24 hour toll  
free hotline to report  
violations

## tip411

To use the tip411 program,  
tipsters can text LADWF  
and their tip to 847411 or  
download the "LADWF Tips"  
iPhone app from the Apple  
App Store free of charge.

The information is received by an LDWF operator and immediately relayed to an LDWF agent who will investigate. If the information results in an arrest, the caller is eligible for a cash reward. Since the program began, more than \$280,000 in rewards has been paid. Information provided by Operation Game Thief informants has resulted in the apprehension of more than 700 violators, who were convicted on a multitude of state and federal charges.